

INTRO

- As we anticipate Fall, what is something you are excited and anxious about?

READ

Jeremiah 29:1,4-11

REFLECT & RESPOND

We continue to look at the critical practices we need to cultivate if we are to build resilience as disciples. Today: *Forging Resilience in our cultural moment through cultivating discernment.*

FORGING RESILIENCE (Lessons from Babylon)...

In every generation and culture, God’s people must ask: how do we live in the tension of being *in* the world, but not *of* the world? Jeremiah’s letter provides some rich and timeless answers.

Qu: As you read through Jeremiah’s letter, what lessons do you see for the ways God would want his people to live in a city like Toronto?

At least 2 ways in which God encourages his people to respond to the adverse situation:

- **Be a people of Faithful Presence**
- **Be a People of Hope**

Regardless of how foreign & hostile to their own values Babylon must’ve been, God’s people were to continue to be faithful to God in their everyday life and be a people of hope in God’s redemptive purposes.

...IN OUR CULTURAL MOMENT...

We have entered the digital age and with that has brought a level of complexity, acceleration, uncertainty and anxiety. In a real sense, ours is a digital Babylon we now need to navigate. Screens are profoundly changing our human experience (for better and worse) and the abundance of information we have access to has not resulted in greater wisdom. The great need of our cultural moment in order to be a people of

faithful presence and hope is to cultivate discernment.

Qu: in what way/s have you seen screens & technology change you for good and/or bad?

...THROUGH CULTIVATING DISCERNMENT.

Discernment is the ability to rightly judge. It’s understanding life from God’s perspective. In other words, godly wisdom, which leads to godly living. We cultivate wisdom as we grow UP, IN, and OUT as followers of Jesus.

- **UP: Seek God and anchor ourselves in Scripture**

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom....” Ps 111:10

Time spent with God and in his word forms and transforms us towards his vision and purposes.

- **IN: Community**

“Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.” Pr 13:20

To seek wisdom from others (not just Google, Siri or Alexa!) requires humility.

- **OUT: Mission — living a faithful, hopeful presence as we engage the culture around us.**

In Jn 20:21 Jesus sends us out in the power of his Spirit to be his people—faithful, hopeful, engaged, present—to the world around us.

Qu: how might God be challenging you to engage the “Babylon” around you more faithfully and hopefully (e.g. where you live, work, study, play etc.)?

PRAY

- “Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you, and **pray to the Lord on its behalf.**”